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19 November 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: HPSCI Briefing -- 19 November 1985

Attendees: Daniel, Kastenmeier, Stokes, Beilenson, Hamilton, Stump, Ireland, Cheney, Livingston, McEwen, Brown (late), and 10 staff.

Absent : Dwyer, McHugh, Roe, McCurdy, Hyde, Michel

The DDI addressed the following topics in the 30-minute briefing segment:

Colombian Volcano Disaster  
Colombian Guerrilla Attack in Bogota  
Failed Coup in Liberia  
Snap Election in the Philippines

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The following questions were asked:

Hamilton: Will Marcos be picking a successor when he names his Vice President? Probably not.

What will be the impact of a perceived rigged election? Marcos will try to make the rigging not too obvious; in any case electorate expects it to be rigged.

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Stump: Is Savimbi a Marxist (Hyde question from last briefing). Answered from talking points prepared for Hyde query. (Stump asked for copy; OLL will provide.)

What will rigged Philippine election and Marcos victory mean for the opposition? Will weaken them for next legislative elections; result in lost opportunity for effective democratic participation in government.

Stokes: Don't Liberian officials contend that US-Cuba-Libya were behind the coup plot? Reports early on that some did; but no official allegations.

Could coup have been planned by Doe? We do not know.

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[REDACTED]

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Ireland:

[REDACTED]

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Was M-19 after drug records in its attack in Bogota? Some reports suggest so; do not know for sure.

Cheney: Do we know details of Anglican negotiator Waite's mission in Lebanon? No.

Daniel: Was there an SR-71 flight at the time Soviet equipment for Nicaragua was seen at Mariel harbor? Do not know (OLL will task DDS&T and CRES for answer).

[REDACTED]

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There is no briefing scheduled for 26 November; unlikely to be one on 3 December because Congress reconvenes that same day. OLL will keep us apprised.

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Office of the Deputy Director for Intelligence  
1:51 PM Monday, November 18, 1985

NOTE TO: Robert M. Gates

FROM:

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SUBJECT: HPSCI Tuesday Briefing Material

Attached is most of the material for tomorrow's briefing:

COLOMBIA Volcano Disaster and Last Week's Guerrilla Attack

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LIBERIA Foiled Coup Attempt

- Includes sub-question asked by HPSCI on the fairness of the election process.
- Background talking points on economic problems.

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PHILIPPINES Snap Election

- Chart handout showing opposition coming.
- Recall that Rep. Daniel thinks we are too pessimistic.

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SYRIA-JORDAN-IRAQ Reconciliation

ANGOLA Is Savimbi a Marxist?

- Question Rep. Hyde asked us to answer.

LIBYA Possible SA-5 Deliveries

- Text will be coming up this afternoon.

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18 November 1985

Quiwonkpa's Failed Coup

Former Commanding General Quiwonkpa, who engineered the coup attempt last Tuesday (12 Nov), was executed last week and his body put up for public viewing to quash any remaining popular support for his effort to unseat Head of State Doe.

- Quiwonkpa had been in exile in the US, Ivory Coast, and most recently Sierra Leone, since his implication in a failed coup against Doe in 1983. Prior to his exile he had some measure of popular support among junior officers and unlisted men.
- We have little information on the men that operated with him, but about 20-30 Sierra Leonean mercenaries were reportedly involved. Some supporters of the coup apparently have escaped into Ivory Coast.

The rebels probably moved last week in hopes of taking advantage of opposition claims of fraud in last month's presidential and legislative elections.

- Doe announced himself as the victor despite opposition claims that Liberian Action Party Candidate Jackson Doe had won. Elections results are due to be certified by the end of the month.
- Quiwonkpa and his followers probably calculated that they could rally public support for their takeover by promising to restore political freedom and reverse Liberia's chronic economic decline.

Doe was able to put down the coup because Quiwonkpa did not have the full support of key military units.

- The majority of the 800-man Executive Mansion Guard and the 400-man first battalion--made up largely of Doe's fellow Krahn tribesmen--remained loyal to Doe and were instrumental in thwarting the coup.
- The rebels attacked, but were unable to break into the Executive Mansion where Doe remained throughout the attempt. Many plotters fled after troops loyal to Doe recaptured a radio station and announced they were in control.

Doe has acted quickly and forcefully to purge his government and military of possible coup backers.

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- Many of Quinwonkpa's fellow Gio tribesmen from north central Nimba county have been killed or arrested.
- Candidates who participated in last month's presidential election and other key opposition leaders also have been arrested, but we are unable to confirm reports of executions.
- We have reports of violent retaliation by some undisciplined troops, but Monrovia is now calm and armed soldiers are gradually returning to their duties.

Although Doe's position probably has been strengthened in the wake of the coup attempt, it nevertheless highlights the vulnerability of any regime to discontented elements in the 6,600-man military which is the final arbiter of power in Liberia.

- The majority of the armed forces probably see Doe as the best guarantor of their corporate interests, but he will have to be sensitive to complaints of late pay, ethnic favoritism, or personal rivalries which could serve as powerful rallying points for future coups.
- Doe will use the attempt to intimidate the opposition, but holding key leaders without trial or excessive brutality will further undermine his popularity and the legitimacy of the return to civilian rule.

The failed coup may temporarily strain relations with Washington--suspected by some officials of encouraging the plotters--but Monrovia is likely to avoid seriously jeopardizing ties to its principal economic and military benefactor.

- Doe may resist US urgings of restraint by accusing the opposition of complicity in the coup attempt and arguing that he must purge all potential threats to his rule.
- Doe is likely to request additional US financial and military assistance to help beef up his personal security, placate disgruntled members of the military, and stem chronic economic decline.

### Presidential and Legislative Elections

Liberia held multiparty elections on 15 October for the first time since Head of State Doe seized power in a military coup in 1980. Three opposition parties--the Liberian Action Party (LAP), the Unity Party (UP), and the Liberian Unification Party (LUP)--participated along with Doe's National Democratic Party of Liberia (NDPL).

- Voting came off with surprisingly few problems. Opposition members were allowed to observe balloting at most polls and were generally pleased with voting procedures.
- Turnout was heavy throughout the country and voters felt free to cast ballots for any of four parties. With only few exceptions, the military was noticeably absent at polling places and observed orders to remain in their barracks.

Nevertheless, the elections were marred by allegations of irregularities during ballot counting and the opposition has refused to participate in the new government which is scheduled to convene in December.

- Despite the government's announcement that Doe was elected with 50.1 percent of the vote, the opposition firmly believes LAP candidate Jackson Doe won.
- The opposition also claims it won more than 13 of 64 seats in the House and 5 of 26 in the Senate, credit to them by the government.

We have no hard evidence that Doe actually lost the election and cooked the results.

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In the wake of the failed coup on 12 November, Doe has clamped down on the opposition and further reduced the likelihood that the opposition will participate in a national unity government.

- The three opposition candidates and many key leaders have been arrested for questioning regarding the coup attempt.
- Doe has accused the Liberian Action Party of conspiring in the coup attempt, and he is likely to ban its participation in the new government.

Doe could decide to delay or abort the transition to civilian rule if the opposition remains firm in its refusal to participate. Doe could proclaim himself president and pledge to democratize the new government at some future date.

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- Doe is likely to have considerable difficulty boosting his sagging popularity and will continue to rely on harsh tactics to suppress the opposition.
- He will probably continue to make spur-of-the-moment decisions on political problems rather than adhere to a long term strategy of opening the political system.

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Details of Economic Crisis

Fiscal mismanagement and stagnant export markets have placed serious strains on Liberia's economy.

- Chronic budget deficits have forced Liberia to borrow heavily abroad--external debt has increased by two-thirds since 1979 to \$1 billion.
- Vital iron ore and rubber exports have declined rapidly since 1980 as international prices tumbled and the strong US dollar--which serves as the official currency--hurt export competitiveness.

Withdrawal of external credit facilities may result in periodic shortages in food and fuel imports in the near future.

- Liberia cannot draw on its suspended IMF standby agreement pending clearance of about \$34 million in arrears.
- Commercial credit lines also have been cut because of overdue debt payments.

With few resources available to finance this fiscal year's projected budget deficit of \$164 million, Monrovia is likely to take drastic measures.

- The continual release of local coins to cover domestic expenditures already has all but severed Liberia's traditional link to the US dollar.
- Liberia may intensify requests for increased US assistance, but lagging payments on US loans threaten suspension of future aid.

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RESPONSE TO QUESTION FROM REP. HYDE

18 November 1985

## Talking Points for the DDI

Angola: Orientation of UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi

Savimbi, in our view, is a pragmatic nationalist who does not appear firmly wedded to any particular ideological or radical orientation.

- He received his higher education in Portugal and Switzerland, switching from medicine to political science. He received some training in guerrilla warfare in Communist China.
  - Savimbi professes to be a Christian and an adherent of the United Church of Christ, which funded his early university studies.
  - Prior to Angolan independence in 1975, Savimbi attracted aid from Communist China, was an admirer of Mao's guerrilla tactics, and visited Peking twice, all of which fueled rumors that he was a "Maoist". Savimbi has received no aid from Peking since the 1970s.
  - In the April 1984 issue of Reason magazine, Savimbi is quoted as saying that as a guerrilla leader and tactician, Mao Tse-tung was a genius, "but his ideas and methods on running a society and its economy should be avoided at all costs."
- Available evidence does not suggest that Savimbi espouses Marxist political ideas.
- He has promised to hold free elections and to protect basic human rights if UNITA were to come to power. In April 1975, Savimbi was the only major Angolan guerrilla leader to agree to compete in national elections.
  - UNITA is organized along the lines of a mass organization or front, not an elitist vanguard party. Savimbi therefore is not following classical Marxist-Leninist philosophy in organizing UNITA.
  - Savimbi has propounded a philosophy of black power, or "Negritude", probably in part as a reaction to the role played within the MPLA by Marxist-oriented mulattoes. Leopold Senghor, Senegal's former moderate, pro-Western President, was the leading African proponent of Negritude.

Savimbi's statements on how Angola's economy should be organized if UNITA comes to power reject a totally centrally planned and controlled economy.

--He calls for a mixed economy of state and private enterprises, and has described himself as a moderate socialist. His approach--probably along the lines of Western European socialism--appears little different from policies long pursued by moderate pro-Western African states as Ivory Coast, Senegal, Kenya, and Cameroon.

--A 1977 UNITA party congress spelled out a program for a future UNITA government that included free and compulsory education, free medical care, and an agriculturally-based economy with privately-owned farms and state controlled public services.

--Savimbi in public statements says he would welcome and support private investment in Angola's economy.

Savimbi's moderate African, Arab, and Western European supporters voice no qualms about his ideology.

--Moreover, we doubt that South Africa would back Savimbi if he were believed to be a Marxist-Leninist.

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## Snap Election Update

Marcos last week submitted a letter to the National Assembly stating that he will resign from office on the first day of the new presidential term. He also submitted a bill to the Assembly establishing procedures for the special election, now tentatively scheduled for early to mid-February. The election bill is slated to be discussed in the Assembly this week, following final debate on a succession bill currently before the body.

- A President--and possibly a Vice President--will be elected to serve six-year terms ending 13 June 1992.
- Candidates must file their bid by 2 December.
- Guidelines will be established for accreditation of private citizens watch dog groups, official accreditation of the dominant opposition party, and deadlines for voter registration.

To pave the way for debate over the election bill, the Assembly passed the critical election code last week.

- The ruling party changed the election code to incorporate opposition demands for election safeguards, including the use of tamper proof ballot boxes and prohibiting voting areas within military installations.
- The code, however, contains several provisions that heavily stack the deck in favor of the ruling party. These include allowing local government officials to sit on poll monitoring panels and granting the elections commission--controlled by Marcos--the power to disqualify individual poll monitors of designated watchdog groups such as NAMFREL.

Despite public reservations about the constitutionality of Marcos's resignation scheme, the opposition seems to be moving towards a decision to participate; frictions among the leading contenders, however, appear about to end any chance of opposition unity for the elections.

- Opposition groups met this weekend to choose a Presidential and Vice Presidential candidate, but the Embassy reports that the meetings were acrimonious. The chances for opposition unity have dropped sharply in our view, despite agreement among most leaders that a joint ticket between Corazon Aquino and Salvador Laurel would make the strongest opposition ticket.
- Meanwhile, Cory Aquino told the DCM that she has decided to run in the election, but refuses to share a ticket with Laurel. In a separate conversation with the DCM, Laurel confided that he would not accept a Vice Presidential slot on Mrs. Aquino's ticket and was committed to running no matter what other opposition leaders had planned.
- For its part, NAMFREL is concerned that it will only be able to monitor 60 percent of the country's polls if the election is held on its current timetable, but is moving ahead with efforts to organize effectively before February.

[redacted]

**President Marcos, meanwhile, is not waiting for the Assembly to debate the bill.**

- He campaigned last week in the Visayan Island of Cebu--a traditional opposition stronghold--and is planning to make one campaign trip out of Manila a week. [redacted]

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**Marcos is almost certainly confident that he can win an election.**  
[redacted] moreover, [redacted] he is leaving  
**nothing to chance.**

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- Last August he packed the election commission with loyalists.
- He also has removed operational control of the local police from the military and returned it to local mayors--a move that many political observers believe is designed to facilitate the use of these units to intimidate voters during balloting.

**As the campaign gets underway Marcos still has to decide how to handle General Ver's impending acquittal.**

- The verdict on Ver and 25 others is in, and is due to be announced on Wednesday. A motion for mistrial filed by 30 prominent Filipinos is currently before the Supreme Court and could delay the announcement, however.
- In any case, Marcos does not need Ver as Chief of Staff to ensure military loyalty during the elections. Ver continues to remain active behind the scenes in the military and controls its considerable intelligence apparatus, which recently conducted a nationwide survey to gauge public reaction to the notion of an early vote. Marcos also included Ver in a meeting held Monday with senior military officials to discuss Marcos's proposed reorganization of the armed forces.

[redacted]  
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Talking Points for the DDI  
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Syria-Jordan-Iraq Reconciliation

Syria sees its participation in reconciliation talks with Jordan as an opportunity to take advantage of the faltering Hussein-Arafat peace initiative and to reinforce the hardline Arab position regarding negotiations with Israel. At the same time Syria may be taking cautious steps toward a tactical accommodation with Iraq to create an alternative to its souring relations with Iran.

- We do not believe that Syria's efforts signifies a willingness to make concessions on their opposition to the Hussein-Arafat accord or to modify their support for Iran in its war with Iraq.
- Although Damascus has reportedly been able to extract sizable financial commitments from the Saudis in exchange for its efforts to repair relations with Amman and Baghdad, these inducements alone do not offer enough incentives for actual reconciliation. [REDACTED]

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Assad believes closer ties to Amman will enable Syria to control the peace process and restrict Jordanian options. Syria remains determined not to allow other Arab states to renounce the policy of confrontation toward Israel or accept bilateral settlements.

- Assad would like to appropriate from Hussein the preeminent role in formulating Arab terms for a settlement with Israel. [REDACTED]

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Assad seems prepared to explore all possibilities that might enable Syria to play a central role in inter-Arab relations.

- Assad may try to maintain Syria's radical ties while improving its standing with moderate Arab states. [REDACTED]

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An accommodation between Syria and Iraq, if it develops, is likely to be fleeting--because of historic political animosities. The Syrian approach to Iraq is prompted by economic considerations and Syria's growing annoyance with its Iranian ally.

- Iran's suspension of oil shipments to Syria during the last month and friction over Syrian debts are factors causing Damascus to reassess its ties to Iran.
- The Syrians have been angered by Iranian interference in Lebanon--particularly by the activities of Iranian-backed Muslim fundamentalists, who are determined to undermine Syrian efforts to impose order on Lebanon's warring factions.

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Talking Points for DDI  
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We believe that even if SA-5 equipment is delivered to Tripoli at this time, construction of missile sites/complexes and training for the Libyan crews could require another year before the Libyan SA-5's become fully operational.

- Qadhafi is likely to insist, as he has for other weapons systems, on Libyan control of the SA-5s.
- We believe that Qadhafi would construct missile sites along the northern coast of Libya such as Benghazi, Misratah, and Tripoli/Tarabulus in order to protect the Libyan-claimed Gulf of Sidra and the capital city.
- When operational, SA-5 missiles fired from Libyan sites will have a maximum operational range of approximately 300 kilometers; enough to cover the entire Gulf of Sidra and the portion of the southern Mediterranean operating area north of the Gulf.

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If Qadhafi believes that the US is likely to respond to or retaliate against him, especially over construction of the SA-5 sites and deployment of missiles, he may be willing to accept Soviet or Syrian personnel to help man the Libyan SA-5s. This, in turn, would decrease the amount of time necessary to develop operational SA-5 sites to be used to target US military forces operating in the Mediterranean.

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